836 pure until her marriage," said Dr. Vermale elsewhere. "Those are sentiments which the Tuareg do not understand. Thus, as soon as she is nubile, she goes to the ohal and it is not long before she is deflowered. Virginity does not exist and has no representative value in the eyes of the Tuareg." (2) Indeed, the women are

2. Op. cit., p. 171.

more or less easy. Some give themselves to the first comer; others grant their favors to only a small group of friends. To grant them [839 577] only to a single person, however, would be judged in very bad taste and a sign of perversion.

[554] No one finds fault with their free mores, on the condition that they let themselves be courted only by men of a social condition equal to their own. Some women let themselves be courted by slaves and that is considered a shame for them.

842 /290/ One may be astonished that unwed mothers are not more numerous with such dissolute mores. Contraception is com- [833] monly used, and, as Dr. Foley said, effusio seminis inter crura is probably the frequent conclusion of the nocturnal rendezvous after the ahal. (1) These restrictive measures must not be unre-

1. Moeurs et médecine des Touaregs de l'Ahaggar /Ahaggar Tuareg Mores and Medicine/, p. 56.

lated to the low birth rate of the Tuareg, and it is quite possible that the married Tuareg woman continues to practice them.

847 Bearing children out of wedlock and bastardy (agama) are the [848] object of public discredit. The Tuareg rarely practice abortion, but infanticides used to be quite numerous, and no one thought of being offended by them. When a woman finds herself pregnant

847 under these circumstances, she usually goes to visit a relative and tries to hide her pregnancy. No one is taken in, but nobody says [754] anything. She goes to see a marabout who, for a rather high price, makes a few mysterious signs before the sinner, writes a few words in Arabic on a small board, washes the writing, and gathers the water in a gourd for the woman to drink. In case these practices are successful (?), a second sum identical to the first one is paid. [278] If not, the woman tries several mixtures, generally with a base of adjerdjir (Cassia abavata), and in case the results are still negative, the baby is simply strangled when it comes into the world. Al- [797] though these mores are still more or less in force, they seem some- ● 848 what reduced by Islamization, and unnatural mothers are sometimes punished severely.

174 The ahal seems to have existed in ancient North African Libyan tribes. Herodotus mentioned the community of women among the Nasamonians, and the ahal is, in fact, only a derived and evolved form of it, if one could call it evolved.

582 Marriage. -- With the existence of such easy mores, it is understandable that young men and women do not care to marry early. Women rarely marry before the age of twenty, and men, before thirty.

584 Although the girl is free with her body, as we have seen, she [593] still needs her father's authorization to marry. On the other hand, however, it is rare for a husband to be imposed on her or for her to be married before puberty, as is the custom among the Arabs.

/291/ Mates are chosen in the lovers' meetings which form a sort of trial marriage. The suitor must ask the young girl's father through one of his parents or through a religious person if there is one in the region.

[184] Among the Ihaggaren everyone is informed of the suit, but in Air this is not the case; there the mother and the family of [587] the girl are informed only when everything is arranged. If the woman has already been married, her father's permission is no longer necessary.

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25

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Fig. 295. Tuareg women drumming and singing at a feast. The drum is a large mortar provided with a piece of goat-skin. Ahaggar, the *Ajjer-ou-tahit* tribe.

583 bride-wealth which does not constitute a proper purchase. The payment of bride-wealth may have an economic aspect, but its main function is most probably not a purely economic one. The same is perhaps the case with

583 What then is the function of bride-wealth? I believe that this question can be answered if we consider
586 Tuareg feelings towards bride-wealth in case of divorce. If a man divorces his wife because she has
● 848 committed adultery, he has the right to the return of his bride-wealth animals, but the Ahaggar Tuareg say that it is improper to claim the return of bride-wealth whatever the cause of the divorce, and the Ayr Tuareg consider it most disgraceful. It would be shameful, utterly improper in fact, if a dissolved marriage has been blessed with children. For children born of a marriage dissolved by the husband taking back his bride-wealth are very much like *awlim*, that is "a child born out of wedlock". Bonds of kinship in respect of illigitimate children are not socially recognized. These children are looked down upon even by their true kinsmen. Illigitimate children therefore have great difficulty in getting married, and this is also true of their mothers. Nobody wants to marry a woman who has children born out of wedlock, while a divorced woman having one or several children can easily get re-married.

7:Nicolaisen E-5 (1951-1962) 1963 MS25 Tuareg MS25
Middle East M1

T 583 586 844 It would seem from all this that the main function of bride-wealth is to create a social bond between two families that intermarry, and is a sort of confirmation of the social rights of the children. When bride-wealth is not taken back at the dissolution of a marriage the marriage is not socially dissolved. When two people divorce they continue to have each other's relations as in-laws with whom they have joking and avoidance exactly as if they were still married, and the children continue to have their full rights within both families.

The fact that bride-wealth is the outward symbol of the persistence of in-law relations when a marriage is dissolved, discloses the true meaning of bride-wealth, which is more clearly understood when we consider that children of a dissolved marriage, provided the bride-wealth is not claimed back, will belong to the father as long as he is alive, and not to the mother. The mother and her family obtain no right to the children until their father has died. It is further stated by some Tuareg that a child of a dissolved marriage from which bride-wealth is taken back will have no right to inherit its father. Bride-wealth is a symbolic expression of the new bonds established between two families at a marriage, and it places children of this marriage in the father's family until his death, and secures their inheritance rights in respect of the father and his paternal kin. All this seems to agree with the fact that the Northern Tuareg vassals, who give bride-wealth in goats, do not always hand over all animals at a marriage. The full payment may be postponed for some years, but should be accomplished before the birth of a child.

T [171] The explanation I have given of the functional position of Tuareg bride-wealth would seem to be in agreement with Radcliffe-Brown's account of the functional position of the *lobola* payments of South Africa. Radcliffe-Brown says that one of the chief functions of *lobola* is to fix the social position of the children of a marriage. If the proper payment is made by a family, then the children of the woman who comes to them in exchange for the cattle belong to that family (Radcliffe-Brown 1952, p. 30). This is also stated by Krige (cf. Krige 1937, p. 113).

M 582 The functional position of Tuareg bride-wealth should perhaps also be viewed in the light of recent investigations on the function of bride-wealth in Middle Eastern societies, where preferential marriage is that to a father's brother's daughter. This preferential marriage type has been explained in different ways by different authors. Westermarck says that marriages with a father's brother's daughter are popular because they keep the property in the family, and especially popular in shereefian families, because they preserve the blood pure (Westermarck 1914, p. 53). The argument that marriage with a father's brother's daughter keeps property within the family has been recognized also by Granquist (cf. Granquist 1931, p. 78), and by many other anthropologists. But this argument is valid only when Koranic law is observed, which is not always the case (F. Barth 1954, p. 170; cf. Murphy & Kasdan 1959, p. 17).

Wellhausen observed that marriage with a paternal cousin served the purpose of strengthening the kinship tie within the family, and he believed that marriages contracted within a village had the function of solidifying relationships between its inmates (cf. Westermarck 1914, p. 56). Quite recently this viewpoint has been taken up and reformulated by F. Barth who states that marriage with a father's brother's daughter plays a prominent rôle in solidifying the minimal lineage as a corporate group in factional struggle (F. Barth 1954, p. 171), while Murphy and Kasdan, who refer to Barth's study